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# Fostering Great Experiences for UX-Tasked Student Workers

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# Fostering Great Experiences for UX-Tasked Student Workers



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Designing for Digital  
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1.

# THREE DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS



Penn State



# CSU San Marcos

(and also the University of Central Florida)



Michigan

2.

# FOSTERING SUCCESS



Create the right  
environment

# Building partnerships

- ★ Value their voices
- ★ Make use of their networks and experience as a student
- ★ Invite them to the table



A close-up photograph of a single, bright red poppy flower in full bloom. The flower is the central focus, with its delicate petals clearly visible. It stands on a thin, dark stem. The background is a soft-focus field of green grass and other wildflowers, including some small white flowers and yellow buds. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day, which makes the red of the flower stand out against the green.

How do we make the  
experience meaningful?

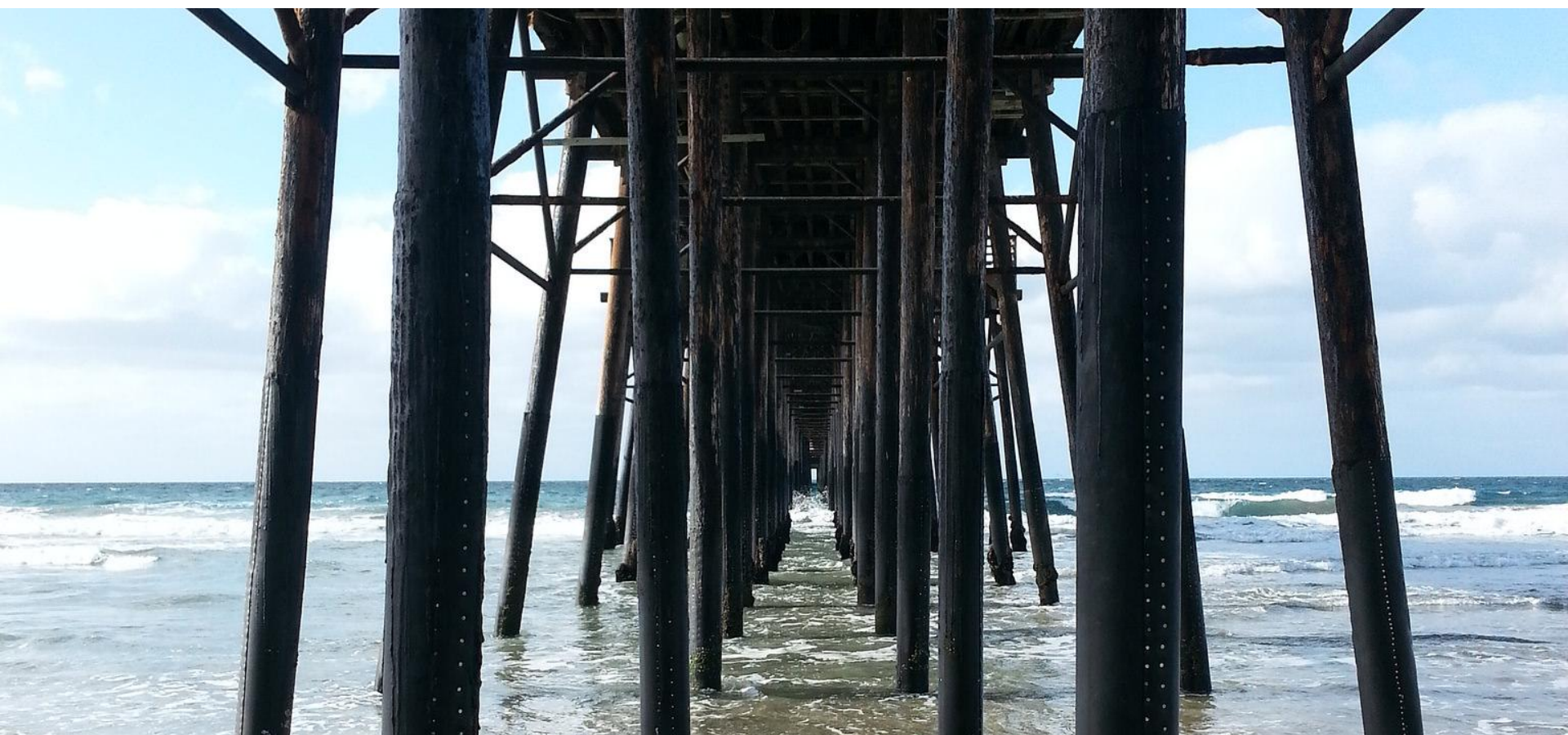
# Create meaningful work

- ★ Let them make important decisions
- ★ Offer flexible schedules so they can incorporate their work into their already busy schedules
- ★ Give them options in the type of work they do - don't give them grunt work

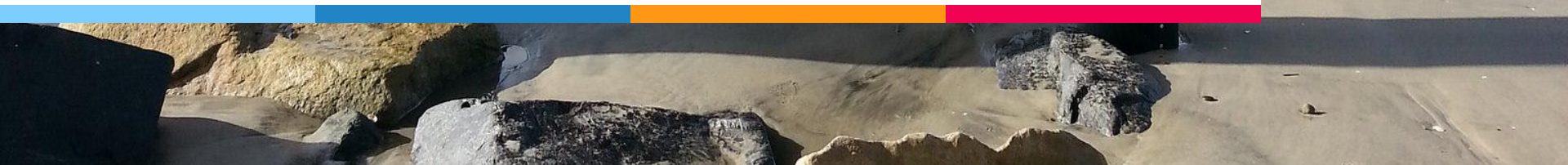
# Create meaningful work

- ★ Provide real projects with challenges to be solved
- ★ Consider longer projects so they develop a sense of ownership
- ★ Let them fail once in a while - it's how we learn best
- ★ Overcoming tough challenges can bring immense joy





How do we support our  
student workers?



# Top motivation

- ★ Earning money
- ★ Gaining work experience
- ★ Developing skills
- ★ Building a resume

Jacobson, H. A., & Shuyler, K. S. (2013). Student perceptions of academic and social effects of working in a university library. *Reference Services Review*, 41(3), 547-565.

# Survey responses

- ★ Positive feelings
- ★ No correlation to their majors
- ★ Not beyond “a token line on a resume”

Charles, L. H., Lotts, M., & Todorinova, L. (2017). A survey of the value of library employment to the undergraduate experience. *Journal of Library Administration*, 57(1), 1-16.



*Training begins with supervisors' intentions.*

Becker-Redd, K., Lee, K., & Skelton, C. (2018). Training Student Workers for Cross-Departmental Success in an Academic Library: A New Model. *Journal of Library Administration*, 58(2), 153-165.

# Provide support (besides paycheck)

- ★ Clear expectations
- ★ Ongoing encouragement and engagement
- ★ Work experience
- ★ Applicable skills
- ★ Research opportunities
- ★ Emotional support
- ★ Diversity (“representation matters”)



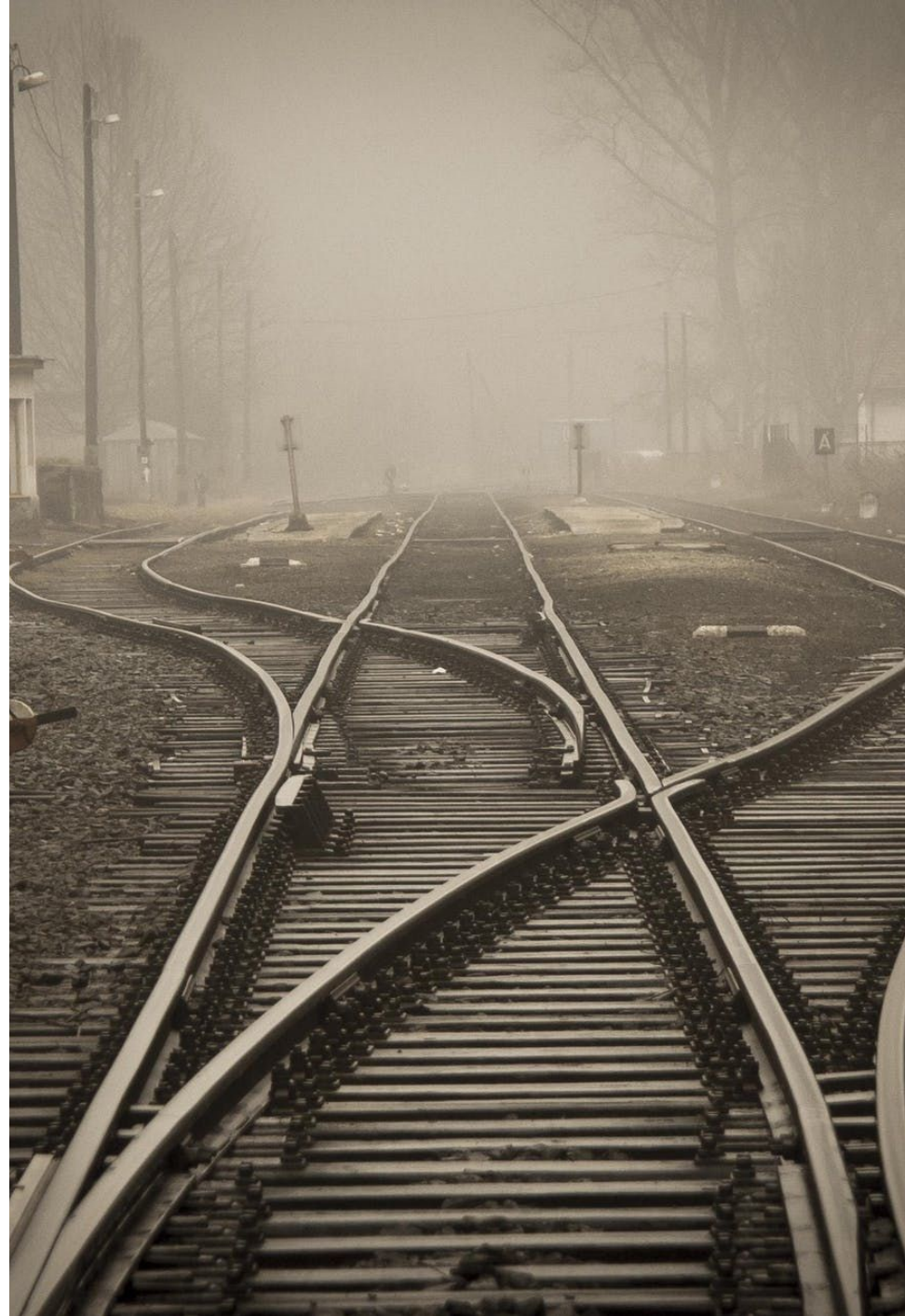
3.

# OVERCOMING CHALLENGES



Sometimes things  
don't go as planned.

- ★ Investment of your time
- ★ High turnover
- ★ Interest in work
- ★ Lacking soft skills



4.

# BENEFITS FOR STUDENT WORKERS

They will  
graduate...

- ★ Workplace skills
- ★ To put on a resume
- ★ Gain confidence
- ★ Learn about a different career path
- ★ Ongoing mentorship
- ★ Connections in the field



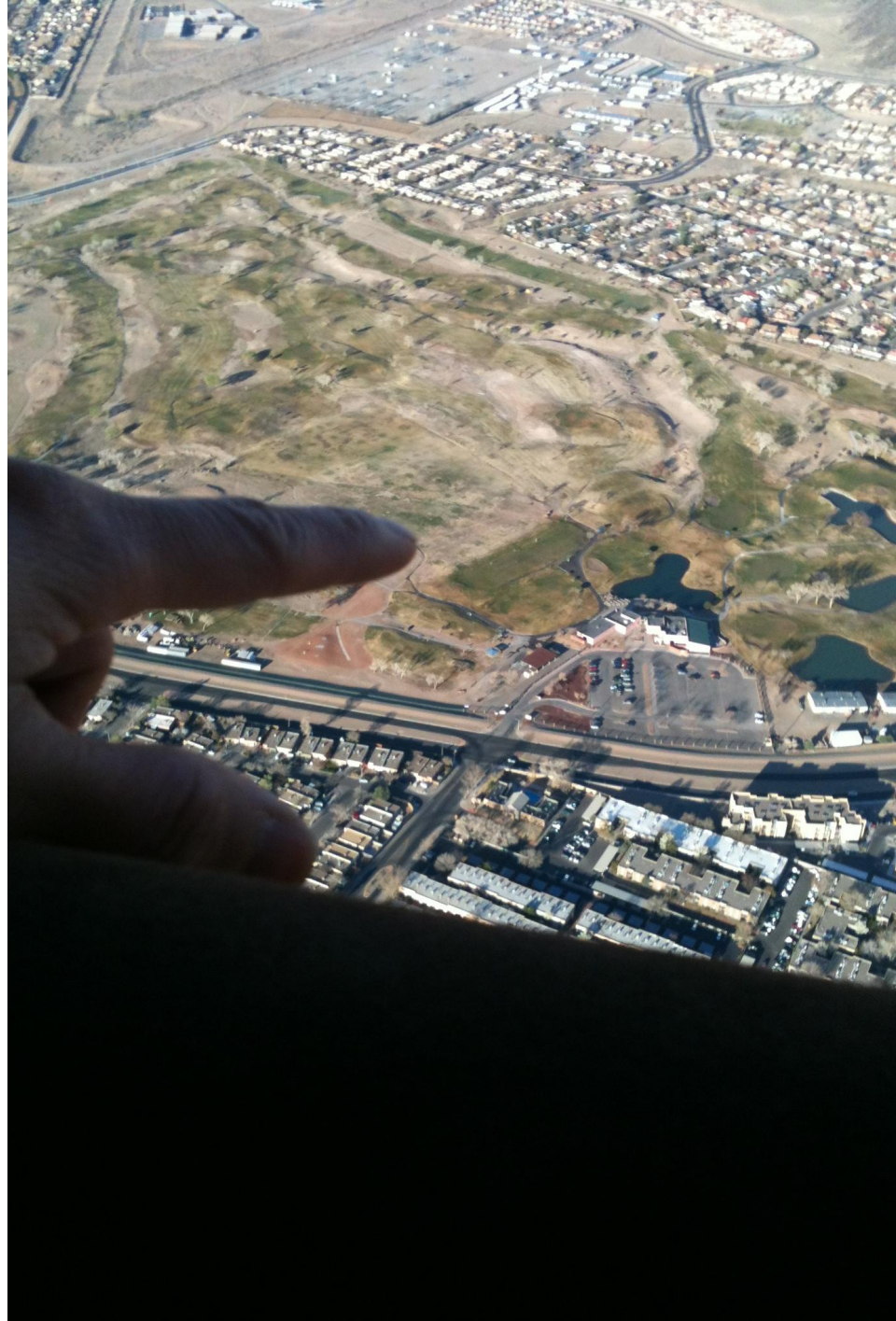
5.

# BENEFITS FOR LIBRARIES



## Their voice and perspective

- ★ Both users and service providers
- ★ Tips for recruitment and retainment
- ★ Genuine responses from testers, peer-to-peer interaction
- ★ Reducing other students' "library anxiety"
- ★ Their energy and personality



## Examples

- ★ Photo elicitation
- ★ Cognitive mapping





*[B]y understanding their contribution to the success of their student workers, [libraries] may be better equipped to communicate their overall value to the university community.*

Charles, L. H., Lotts, M., & Todorinova, L. (2017). A survey of the value of library employment to the undergraduate experience. *Journal of Library Administration*, 57(1), 1-16.

# Thanks!

## Any questions?

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